

Transparency

DPR is committed to working openly with the people we serve, to make our operations and decisionmaking understandable to everyone affected. We value transparency, cooperation, service, accountability, and public involvement.

Good public participation results in decisions that are fair, equitable, efficient and meet the needs of those affected by them. It also helps to build good relationships with the people we serve, which is vital to our ability to respond to their needs and concerns in both the short and long term.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PILOT PROJECT

DPR's air monitoring project in the Fresno County community of Parlier shows how public involvement can forge links between government and the communities it serves.

The Parlier project is one of several pilot projects in Cal/EPA's Environmental Justice (EJ) Action Plan. (Environmental justice is the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to how we develop, adopt, carry out and enforce our laws, regulations, and policies.)

From January to December 2006, DPR and the Air Resources Board analyzed

air in Parlier for traces of pesticides. DPR scientists are evaluating the data to determine the exposure and risk from individual as well as multiple pesticides. DPR and ARB will also evaluate other air pollutants, including vehicle emissions. DPR released interim results over the course of the project, and we expect our full report by early 2008.

If DPR finds that pesticide exposures are a health risk, the next step is to reduce those risks. Our options range from restricting the use of certain pesticides to awarding grants to promote less-toxic alternatives.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION STRENGTHENS PROJECT

The Parlier project differs from previous DPR air monitoring studies. We had never monitored in a single community for an entire year. Second, we had never made public participation an integral part of an air monitoring study.

In Parlier, DPR created an advisory group of local environmental and EJ advocates, farmers, and other community leaders. Beginning in mid-2005, they met to give us their perspective on the project. Their guidance helped us select monitoring sites, pesticides to monitor, and most efficient use of resources. At their recommendation, we held a community workshop in Parlier in January 2006 where our scientists

answered questions about the project. DPR continues to meet periodically with the advisory group as we evaluate the data we collected, and the group will help us plan a second workshop in early 2008 to go over the findings with the community.

SHARING PEST MANAGEMENT SUCCESSES

Our technical experts are studying pest management practices in the Parlier area to help develop, evaluate, and promote lower-risk alternatives for Parlier's major crops – grapes, stone fruit, and citrus.

In the fall of 2007, we expect to release a detailed analysis of how progressive Parlier-area growers are dealing with pest problems, and propose ways to share the innovative approaches they are taking with other farmers.

The contacts staff made for the pest management assessment, and the information we gathered, became the foundation for providing more technical and financial support to conservation-minded growers. For example, DPR is funding research at UC's Kearney Agricultural Center in Parlier, aimed at finding less-toxic alternatives for managing vine mealybug, a damaging new grape pest. Partnership overtures to the federal Natural Resources Conservation Service paved the way

As an IT manager, I lead a team of talented professionals who deliver high-quality service and support to our internal and external customers. At DPR, I do what I love and get paid for it!

CATHY COWAN



Cathy Cowan

Information Technology Branch

Like many at DPR, Cathy brings a wide range of knowledge and expertise to her job. With an advanced degree in stream biology/aquatic entomology and after 10 years as a university researcher, she started at DPR in 1993 as a scientist in the exposure monitoring program. Her duties were at first split between scientific research and computer support but then moved more into information technology. She now supervises DPR's network operations and desktop support teams. Her scientific background gives her a unique insight into the IT needs of DPR – a department where decisions must be based on the best science – putting our databases and other information to work not only for staff but making it available and usable for outside researchers and the public.

for financial support for farmers using approved conservation practices in the San Joaquin Valley, starting with the 2007 growing season.

SHARING WHAT WE DO

“Sharing out what we do and how we do it, reaching out to people we didn't reach before,” as DPR Director Mary-Ann Warmerdam puts it, DPR:

- Scheduled several regulatory hearings outside Sacramento, at times and places convenient to local residents, with simultaneous translation into Spanish. We conducted workshops in Sacramento, Oxnard, and Parlier on our air quality initiative.
- Held a dialogue session in spring 2006 on pesticide registration fees as well as a workshop for more than 150 registrants to review changes in the registration process.
- Changed our Web site to make it easier to comment on rulemaking and other pending decisions.
- Assigned the Pest Management Advisory Committee (whose membership is drawn from industry, academia, government, and public interest organizations) a broader role in advising DPR on policy formation and program development. For example, recognizing the increasing urbanization of California, DPR Director Mary-Ann Warmerdam has charged the PMAC with identifying opportunities for DPR to expand its role in non-agricultural pest management.
- In response to criticism that we drafted an EJ strategy and workplan with inadequate public input, we started over, establishing a stakeholder group to increase public participation in developing new plans. In 2006 and 2007, the group held



DPR held a community fair in Parlier to kick off our air monitoring project. We also invited two dozen local agencies to talk about jobs, education, safety and health. These children – among 300 attendees – got to meet their local firefighters.

ten public meetings to hammer out recommendations. Building on their work, DPR will complete working drafts and then hold workshops around the State to widen opportunities for public participation.

- Translated major publications and key rulemaking notices into Spanish. We also translated handouts on protecting workers and families from West Nile virus into Spanish, Vietnamese and Chinese, and distributed them through the California Department of Health Services to local health departments throughout the state.
- Opened how we select pesticides for risk assessment to public comment, and posted more than two dozen completed risk assessments online.

We are also making risk management more transparent and open to public comment. (Risk management is how we decide whether an assessed risk presents a public health concern and, if so, what can be done to reduce the risk.) DPR will have workshops in mid-2007 to get public input on proposed risk reduction measures for MITC-emitting fumigants.
- Will publish, in mid-2007, guides to public participation and what to do in a pesticide emergency. To be available in English and Spanish, the guides will explain how pesticide use is regulated, how to file a complaint, and how to help DPR make better rules.

Reforming Registration

DPR's Registration Reform Initiative shows how government can get better at what it does, embodying Governor's Schwarzenegger's call to "Reform, Rebuild, and Act."

In improving how we register pesticides (that is, license them for sale and use), we had four objectives:

- Shorten how long we take to decide whether to register a product.
- Cut unnecessary workload and costs for both DPR and for companies applying for registration by recognizing improved federal pesticide policies and procedures and by focusing on what is important to California.
- Dispense with activities unrelated to protecting public health and the environment.
- Promote the introduction of lower-risk pesticides.

FOUR OBJECTIVES ACCOMPLISHED

It took some time and much effort, but now we can brag: "4-for-4."

Before a pesticide can be sold or used in California, it must be registered with both U.S. EPA and DPR. We require California registration to make sure pesticides sold in California are effective and won't pose unacceptable risks to people or the environment.

In the past, from California's perspective, U.S. EPA wasn't doing a good enough job overseeing product registration. In response, the State set up a parallel program to more closely review and evaluate applications for registration before pesticides could be used in this State. However, over the past decade, improvements at U.S. EPA prompted DPR to streamline its registration processes to remove duplication with our federal counterparts.

We increased our collaboration with U.S. EPA, exchanging information and data reviews to maximize staff resources and highlight areas of expertise. For example, DPR does dietary risk assessments for U.S. EPA and reviews residue data for specialty crops that are important to California agriculture.

REPEALING DATA OWNERSHIP LAWS

The 2005 repeal of California's data ownership laws also streamlined registration by reducing the number of products requiring scientific evaluation and the time they spend in evaluation. The legislation (AB 1011, Matthews) changed State law to allow DPR to rely on its evaluations of previously submitted data when reviewing new applications for registration. The legislation did not change or reduce California's strict data requirements, designed to protect health and the environment. The new law also allowed concurrent review with U.S. EPA of new active ingredient applications.